



House of Representatives

File No. 1024

General Assembly

January Session, 2009

(Reprint of File No. 869)

Substitute House Bill No. 6676
As Amended by House Amendment
Schedule "A"

Approved by the Legislative Commissioner
May 30, 2009

AN ACT CONCERNING LICENSURE OF MASTER AND CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKERS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General
Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 20-195m of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2009*):

3 As used in subsection (c) of section 19a-14, section 19a-18, sections
4 20-195n to 20-195q, inclusive, sections 2, 6 and 7 of this act and this
5 section:

6 (1) "Licensed clinical social worker" means a person who has been
7 licensed as a clinical social worker pursuant to this chapter;

8 (2) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Public Health;

9 (3) "Department" means the Department of Public Health; [and]

10 (4) "Clinical social work" means the application, by persons trained
11 in social work, of established principles of psychosocial development,
12 behavior, psychopathology, unconscious motivation, interpersonal

13 relationships and environmental stress to the evaluation, assessment,
14 diagnosis and treatment of biopsychosocial dysfunction, disability and
15 impairment, including mental, emotional, behavioral, developmental
16 and addictive disorders, of individuals, couples, families or groups.
17 Clinical social work includes, but is not limited to, counseling,
18 psychotherapy, behavior modification and mental health consultation;

19 (5) "Licensed master social worker" means a person who has been
20 licensed as a master social worker pursuant to this chapter;

21 (6) "Independent practice" means the practice of clinical social work
22 without supervision;

23 (7) "Under professional supervision" means the practice of clinical
24 social work under the supervision of a physician licensed pursuant to
25 chapter 370, an advanced practice registered nurse or registered nurse
26 licensed pursuant to chapter 378, a psychologist licensed pursuant to
27 chapter 383, a marital and family therapist licensed pursuant to
28 chapter 383a, a clinical social worker licensed pursuant to chapter
29 383b, or a professional counselor licensed pursuant to chapter 383c;
30 and

31 (8) "Professional supervision" means face-to-face consultation
32 between one supervisor, described in subdivision (7) of this section,
33 and one person receiving supervision that consists of not less than a
34 monthly review, a written evaluation and assessment by the
35 supervisor of such person's practice of clinical social work.

36 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2009*) (a) An individual licensed as
37 a master social worker pursuant to section 20-195n of the general
38 statutes, as amended by this act, may: (1) Practice clinical social work
39 under professional supervision; and (2) offer a mental health diagnosis
40 provided such diagnosis is offered in consultation with a physician
41 licensed pursuant to chapter 370 of the general statutes, an advanced
42 practice registered nurse licensed pursuant to chapter 378 of the
43 general statutes, a psychologist licensed pursuant to chapter 383 of the
44 general statutes, a marital and family therapist licensed pursuant to

45 chapter 383a of the general statutes or a clinical social worker licensed
46 pursuant to chapter 383b of the general statutes. Except as provided in
47 subsection (c) of section 20-195q of the general statutes, as amended by
48 this act, a licensed master social worker may not engage in
49 independent practice.

50 (b) An individual licensed as a clinical social worker pursuant to
51 section 20-195n of the general statutes, as amended by this act, may
52 practice clinical social work. A licensed clinical social worker may
53 perform all functions of a licensed master social worker and, in
54 addition, may engage in independent practice.

55 Sec. 3. Section 20-195n of the general statutes is repealed and the
56 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2009*):

57 (a) No person shall practice clinical social work unless such person
58 has obtained a license pursuant to this section.

59 (b) An applicant for licensure as a licensed master social worker
60 shall: (1) Hold a master's degree from a social work program
61 accredited by the Council on Social Work Education or, if educated
62 outside the United States or its territories, have completed an
63 educational program deemed equivalent by said council; and (2) pass
64 the masters level examination of the Association of Social Work Boards
65 or any other examination prescribed by the commissioner.

66 (c) [Applicants] An applicant for licensure as a clinical social worker
67 shall: (1) Hold a doctorate or master's degree from a social work
68 program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education or, if
69 educated outside the United States or its territories, have completed an
70 educational program deemed equivalent by said council; (2) have three
71 thousand hours post-master's social work experience which shall
72 include not less than one hundred hours of work under professional
73 supervision by a licensed clinical or certified independent social
74 worker, provided on and after October 1, 2010, such hours completed
75 in this state shall be as a licensed master social worker; and (3) pass the
76 clinical level examination of the [American] Association of [State]

77 Social Work Boards or any other examination prescribed by the
78 commissioner. On and after October 1, 1995, any person certified as an
79 independent social worker prior to October 1, 1995, shall be deemed
80 licensed as a clinical social worker pursuant to this section, except a
81 person certified as an independent social worker on and after October
82 1, 1990, shall not be deemed licensed as a clinical social worker
83 pursuant to this chapter unless such person has satisfied the
84 requirements of subdivision (3) of this [section] subsection.

85 [(b)] (d) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection [(a)] (b) of
86 this section, the commissioner may grant a license by endorsement to
87 an applicant who presents evidence satisfactory to the commissioner
88 that the applicant (1) is licensed or certified as a master social worker
89 or clinical social worker in good standing in another state or
90 jurisdiction whose requirements for practicing in such capacity are
91 substantially similar to or higher than those of this state, and (2) has
92 successfully completed the [clinical] master level examination of the
93 Association of Social Work Boards, or its successor organization, or
94 any other examination prescribed by the commissioner. No license
95 shall be issued under this subsection to any applicant against whom
96 professional disciplinary action is pending or who is the subject of an
97 unresolved complaint.

98 (e) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (c) of this section,
99 the commissioner may grant a license by endorsement to an applicant
100 who presents evidence satisfactory to the commissioner that the
101 applicant is (1) licensed or certified as a clinical social worker in good
102 standing in another state or jurisdiction whose requirements for
103 practicing in such capacity are substantially similar to or higher than
104 those of this state, and (2) has successfully completed the clinical level
105 examination of the Association of Social Work Boards, or its successor
106 organization, or any other examination prescribed by the
107 commissioner. No license shall be issued under this subsection to any
108 applicant against whom professional disciplinary action is pending or
109 who is the subject of an unresolved complaint.

110 Sec. 4. Section 20-195o of the general statutes is repealed and the
111 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2009*):

112 (a) Application for licensure shall be on forms prescribed and
113 furnished by the commissioner. Each applicant shall furnish evidence
114 satisfactory to the commissioner that he has met the requirements of
115 section 20-195n, as amended by this act. The application fee for a
116 clinical social worker shall be two hundred fifty dollars. The
117 application fee for a master social worker shall be one hundred
118 seventy-five dollars.

119 (b) Notwithstanding the provisions of section 20-195n, as amended
120 by this act, concerning examinations, the commissioner may issue a
121 license without examination, [prior to January 1, 1998, to any applicant
122 who offers proof to the satisfaction of the commissioner that he met the
123 requirements of subdivisions (1) and (2) of section 20-195n and was an
124 employee of the federal government with not less than three thousand
125 hours postmaster's social work experience prior to October 1, 1986] to
126 any master social worker applicant who demonstrates to the
127 satisfaction of the commissioner that, on or before October 1, 2009, he
128 or she met the licensing requirements for a master social worker as
129 prescribed in section 20-195n, as amended by this act.

130 (c) [(1)] Each person licensed pursuant to this chapter may apply for
131 renewal of such licensure in accordance with the provisions of
132 subsection (e) of section 19a-88. A fee of one hundred fifty dollars shall
133 accompany each renewal application for a licensed master social
134 worker or a licensed clinical social worker. Each such applicant shall
135 furnish evidence satisfactory to the commissioner of having
136 [participated in] satisfied the continuing education requirements
137 prescribed in section 7 of this act. [The commissioner shall adopt
138 regulations in accordance with chapter 54 to (A) define basic
139 requirements for continuing education programs, (B) delineate
140 qualifying programs, (C) establish a system of control and reporting,
141 and (D) provide for waiver of the continuing education requirement
142 for good cause.

143 (2) A person licensed pursuant to this chapter who holds a
144 professional educator certificate that is endorsed for school social work
145 and issued by the State Board of Education pursuant to sections 10-
146 144o to 10-149, inclusive, may satisfy the continuing education
147 requirements contained in regulations adopted pursuant to this section
148 by successfully completing professional development activities
149 pursuant to subsection (l) of section 10-145b, provided the number of
150 continuing education hours completed by such person is equal to the
151 number of hours per registration period required by such regulations.
152 For purposes of this subdivision, "registration period" means the one-
153 year period during which a license has been renewed in accordance
154 with section 19a-88 and is current and valid.]

155 Sec. 5. Section 20-195q of the general statutes is repealed and the
156 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2009*):

157 (a) No person shall (1) use the title "licensed master social worker"
158 or any initials associated with such title, or (2) advertise services under
159 the description of a licensed master social worker, as defined in section
160 20-195m, as amended by this act, unless such person is licensed as a
161 master social worker pursuant to this chapter.

162 ~~[(a)]~~ (b) No [persons, except those licensed pursuant to this chapter,]
163 person shall (1) use the title "licensed clinical social worker" or any
164 initials associated with such [titles] title, or (2) advertise services under
165 the description of a licensed clinical social worker, as defined in section
166 20-195m, as amended by this act, unless such person is licensed as a
167 clinical social worker pursuant to this chapter.

168 ~~[(b)]~~ (c) Nothing in this section shall prohibit: (1) A student enrolled
169 in a doctoral or master's degree program accredited by the Council on
170 Social Work Education from performing such work as is incidental to
171 his course of study, provided such person is designated by a title
172 which clearly indicates his status as a student; (2) a person holding a
173 doctoral or master's degree from a program accredited by the Council
174 on Social Work Education from gaining social work experience under

175 professional supervision, provided such activities are necessary to
176 satisfy the work experience required by section 20-195n, as amended
177 by this act, and such person is designated as "social work intern",
178 "social work trainee" or other title clearly indicating the status
179 appropriate to his level of training; (3) a person licensed or certified in
180 this state in a field other than clinical social work from practicing
181 within the scope of such license or certification; (4) a person enrolled in
182 an educational program or fulfilling other state requirements leading
183 to licensure or certification in a field other than social work from
184 engaging in work in such other field; [or] (5) a person who is employed
185 or retained as a social work designee, social worker, or social work
186 consultant by a nursing home or rest home licensed under section 19a-
187 490 and who meets the qualifications prescribed by the department in
188 its regulations from performing the duties required of them in
189 accordance with state and federal laws governing those duties; (6) for
190 the period from October 1, 2009, to October 1, 2012, inclusive, a master
191 social worker from engaging in independent practice, provided after
192 October 1, 2012, a master social worker may not engage in
193 independent practice unless such master social worker has obtained
194 licensure as a clinical social worker; (7) a social worker practicing
195 community organization, policy and planning, research or
196 administration that does not include engaging in clinical social work or
197 supervising a social worker engaged in clinical treatment with clients;
198 (8) an employee of the state, who works in a formal clinical social work
199 trainee or internship program, from practicing clinical social work
200 under supervision and without requiring such employee to attain
201 licensure as a master social worker; and (9) individuals with a
202 baccalaureate degree in social work from a Council on Social Work
203 Education accredited program from performing nonclinical social
204 work functions.

205 Sec. 6. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2009*) The department may issue a
206 temporary permit to an applicant for licensure as a master social
207 worker who holds a master's degree from a social work educational
208 program, as described in section 20-195n of the general statutes, as

209 amended by this act, but who has not yet taken the licensure
210 examination prescribed in said section 20-195n. Such temporary permit
211 shall authorize the holder to practice as a master social worker as
212 provided for in section 2 of this act. Such temporary permit shall be
213 valid for a period not to exceed one hundred twenty calendar days
214 after the date of attaining such master's degree and shall not be
215 renewable. Such permit shall become void and shall not be reissued in
216 the event that the applicant fails to pass such examination. The fee for
217 a temporary permit shall be fifty dollars.

218 Sec. 7. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2009*) (a) Except as otherwise
219 provided in this section, each clinical social worker, licensed pursuant
220 to the provisions of chapter 383b of the general statutes, and, on and
221 after October 1, 2010, each master social worker licensed pursuant to
222 said chapter 383b shall complete a minimum of fifteen hours of
223 continuing education during each registration period. For purposes of
224 this section, "registration period" means the twelve-month period for
225 which a license has been renewed in accordance with section 19a-88 of
226 the general statutes and is current and valid.

227 (b) Continuing education required pursuant to this section shall be
228 related to the practice of social work. Such continuing education shall
229 consist of courses, workshops and conferences offered or approved by
230 the Association of Social Work Boards, the National Association of
231 Social Workers, a school or department of social work accredited by
232 the Council on Social Work Education. A licensee's ability to engage in
233 on-line and home study continuing education shall be limited to not
234 more than six hours per registration period. Within the registration
235 period, an initial presentation by a licensee of an original paper, essay
236 or formal lecture in social work to a recognized group of fellow
237 professionals may account for five hours of continuing education
238 hours of the aggregate continuing education requirements prescribed
239 in this section.

240 (c) Each licensee shall obtain a certificate of completion from a
241 provider of the continuing education for all continuing education

242 hours that are successfully completed and shall retain such certificate
243 for a minimum of three years following the license renewal date for
244 which the activity satisfies the continuing education requirement.
245 Upon request by the department, the licensee shall submit such
246 certificate to the department. A licensee who fails to comply with the
247 continuing education requirements prescribed in this section may be
248 subject to disciplinary action pursuant to section 20-195p of the general
249 statutes.

250 (d) A person licensed pursuant to chapter 383b of the general
251 statutes who holds a professional educator certificate that is endorsed
252 for school social work and issued by the State Board of Education
253 pursuant to sections 10-144o to 10-149, inclusive, of the general statutes
254 may satisfy the continuing education requirements contained in this
255 section by successfully completing professional development activities
256 pursuant to subdivision (1) of subsection (l) of section 10-145b of the
257 general statutes, provided the number of continuing education hours
258 completed by such person is equal to the number of hours per
259 registration period required by this section.

260 (e) A licensee applying for the first time for license renewal
261 pursuant to section 20-195o of the general statutes, as amended by this
262 act, shall be exempt from the continuing education requirements of
263 this section. The department may, for a licensee who has a medical
264 disability or illness, grant a waiver of the continuing education
265 requirements or may grant such licensee an extension of time in which
266 to fulfill the requirements, provided the licensee submits to the
267 department an application for waiver or extension of time on a form
268 prescribed by the department along with any documentation required
269 by the department. The department may grant a waiver or extension
270 not to exceed one registration period, except that the department may
271 grant additional waivers or extensions if the initial reason for the
272 waiver or extension continues beyond the period of the waiver or
273 extension. A waiver of the continuing education requirement may be
274 granted by the department to a licensee who is not engaged in social
275 work during a given continuing education registration period,

276 provided the licensee submits a waiver request prior to the expiration
277 of the continuing education period, on a form prescribed by the
278 department.

279 (f) Any licensee granted a waiver of the continuing education
280 requirements pursuant to the provisions of subsection (e) of this
281 section shall be required to complete seven hours of continuing
282 education not later than six months from the date on which such
283 licensee returned to active practice. In addition, such licensee shall
284 comply with the certificate of completion requirements prescribed in
285 subsection (c) of this section.

286 (g) Any licensee whose license has become void pursuant to the
287 provisions of subsection (f) of section 19a-88 of the general statutes,
288 who applies to the department for reinstatement of such license, shall
289 submit with such application evidence documenting that such
290 applicant has successfully completed seven hours of continuing
291 education within the one-year period immediately preceding the date
292 of application for reinstatement.

293 Sec. 8. Subsection (c) of section 19a-14 of the general statutes is
294 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective*
295 *October 1, 2009*):

296 (c) No board shall exist for the following professions that are
297 licensed or otherwise regulated by the Department of Public Health:

298 (1) Speech and language pathologist and audiologist;

299 (2) Hearing instrument specialist;

300 (3) Nursing home administrator;

301 (4) Sanitarian;

302 (5) Subsurface sewage system installer or cleaner;

303 (6) Marital and family therapist;

- 304 (7) Nurse-midwife;
- 305 (8) Licensed clinical social worker;
- 306 (9) Respiratory care practitioner;
- 307 (10) Asbestos contractor and asbestos consultant;
- 308 (11) Massage therapist;
- 309 (12) Registered nurse's aide;
- 310 (13) Radiographer;
- 311 (14) Dental hygienist;
- 312 (15) Dietitian-Nutritionist;
- 313 (16) Asbestos abatement worker;
- 314 (17) Asbestos abatement site supervisor;
- 315 (18) Licensed or certified alcohol and drug counselor;
- 316 (19) Professional counselor;
- 317 (20) Acupuncturist;
- 318 (21) Occupational therapist and occupational therapist assistant;
- 319 (22) Lead abatement contractor, lead consultant contractor, lead
320 consultant, lead abatement supervisor, lead abatement worker,
321 inspector and planner-project designer;
- 322 (23) Emergency medical technician, emergency medical technician-
323 intermediate, medical response technician and emergency medical
324 services instructor;
- 325 (24) Paramedic;
- 326 (25) Athletic trainer; [and]

327 (26) Perfusionist; and

328 (27) Master social worker, subject to the provisions of section 9 of
329 this act.

330 The department shall assume all powers and duties normally vested
331 with a board in administering regulatory jurisdiction over such
332 professions. The uniform provisions of this chapter and chapters 368v,
333 369 to 381a, inclusive, 383 to 388, inclusive, 393a, 395, 398, 399, 400a
334 and 400c, including, but not limited to, standards for entry and
335 renewal; grounds for professional discipline; receiving and processing
336 complaints; and disciplinary sanctions, shall apply, except as otherwise
337 provided by law, to the professions listed in this subsection.

338 Sec. 9. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2009*) The Department of Public
339 Health shall only be required to implement the provisions of chapter
340 383b of the general statutes as relate to the licensure of master social
341 workers, if appropriations are available.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2009</i>	20-195m
Sec. 2	<i>October 1, 2009</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>October 1, 2009</i>	20-195n
Sec. 4	<i>October 1, 2009</i>	20-195o
Sec. 5	<i>October 1, 2009</i>	20-195q
Sec. 6	<i>October 1, 2009</i>	New section
Sec. 7	<i>October 1, 2009</i>	New section
Sec. 8	<i>October 1, 2009</i>	19a-14(c)
Sec. 9	<i>October 1, 2009</i>	New section

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 10 \$	FY 11 \$
Public Health, Dept.	GF - Potential Cost	58,534	206,230
Comptroller Misc. Accounts (Fringe Benefits) ¹	GF - Potential Cost	11,646	48,199
Public Health, Dept.	GF - Potential Revenue Gain	206,300	371,300

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill requires the Department of Public Health (DPH) to create a new licensure category for master social workers within available appropriations, resulting in a potential cost to DPH of \$58,534 in FY 10 and \$206,230 in FY 11 for staff and related expenses. These staff positions would prompt associated fringe benefit costs under the Comptroller of \$11,646 in FY 10 and \$48,199 in FY 11. The bill could also result in a potential revenue gain to the General Fund of \$152,000 in FY 10 and \$272,000 in FY 11.

Potential costs to DPH to issue these initial and renewal licenses, provide complaint investigation, hearings, and prosecution are

¹ The fringe benefit costs for state employees are budgeted centrally in the Miscellaneous Accounts administered by the Comptroller on an actual cost basis. The following is provided for estimated costs associated with additional personnel. The estimated non-pension fringe benefit rate as a percentage of payroll is 25.43%. Fringe benefit costs for new positions do not initially include pension costs as the state's pension contribution is based upon the 6/30/08 actuarial valuation for the State Employees Retirement System (SERS) which certifies the contribution for FY 10 and FY 11. Therefore, new positions will not impact the state's pension contribution until FY 12 after the next scheduled certification on 6/30/2010.

detailed below:

Item	FY 10 \$	FY 11 \$
1.0 Processing Tech	47,534	47,534
1.0 Program Associate (investigator)		64,184
0.5 Staff Attorney (hearing officer)		42,506
0.5 Staff Attorney (prosecutor)		42,506
Equipment (scanner in FY 10, staff computers)	1,500	2,500
Other Expenses (outreach in FY 10, travel for investigator in FY 11, supplies, printing)	9,500	7,000
Total	58,534	206,230

Master social workers must be licensed to engage in independent practice by 10/1/2012, according to Sec. 5 of the bill. The initial license fee would be \$175 and the renewal license fee, to be paid annually during the month of the licensee's birth, would be \$150. It is estimated that 1100 people could apply for initial licenses in FY 10 and FY 11, along with 92 renewals in FY 10 and 1192 renewals in FY 11, resulting in a potential revenue gain to the General Fund of approximately \$206,300 in FY 10 and \$371,300 in FY 11. Funds are not included for this purpose in the budget bill, sHB 6365, as favorably reported by the Appropriations Committee.

The requirement that this new licensure category be developed by DPH within existing budgetary resources will likely result in one of four outcomes: (1) DPH will proceed with the establishment of the new licensure category and require a deficiency appropriation in FY 10; (2) DPH will delay the establishment of the new licensure category pending the approval of additional appropriations to meet this mandate in future fiscal years; (3) DPH will shift administrative resources from other departmental priorities to establish the new licensure category, thereby impacting existing departmental programs; or (4) DPH will not establish the new licensure category.

House "A" strikes the underlying bill and replaces it with the language discussed above.

Sources: 3/16/09 Public Hearing Testimony, Department of Public Health

OLR Bill Analysis**sHB 6676 (as amended by House "A")******AN ACT CONCERNING LICENSURE OF CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKERS.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill creates a new license category for certain social workers. The new licensure program, known as "master social worker," is administered by the Department of Public Health (DPH). The bill: (1) establishes licensure requirements and sets fees for initial licenses and renewals, (2) defines the practice of a master social worker, (3) allows for licensure by endorsement or licensure without examination in certain cases, (4) provides for one-time temporary permits to practice, (5) allows independent practice for a limited time, (5) specifies activities certain master social workers can do, and (6) establishes continuing education requirements.

DPH currently licenses clinical social workers and continues to do so under the bill, with some changes concerning work experience requirements.

The bill specifies that DPH must issue licenses to master social workers only if appropriations are available. It also specifies that no new regulatory board is established for master social workers if the licensure program is in fact implemented.

*House Amendment "A" (1) requires licensure of master social workers only if appropriations are available; (2) lists the health professionals that a licensed master social worker can consult with in offering a mental health diagnosis; (3) defines "professional supervision;" (4) authorizes work under a temporary permit for 120 rather than 270 days; (5) eliminates a date restriction in the previous

version (File 869) for issuing licenses without examination; (6) imposes some continuing education requirements on those granted an exemption or seeking license reinstatement for failure to renew; (7) changes the work experience requirements for clinical social workers; and (8) makes technical changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2009.

MASTER SOCIAL WORKER

Terms and Definitions

Under the bill, a licensed master social worker can practice clinical social work under professional supervision. The bill defines “under professional supervision” as the practice of clinical social work under the supervision of a licensed physician, advanced practice registered nurse (APRN), registered nurse (RN), psychologist, marital and family therapist, clinical social worker, or professional counselor. “Professional supervision” is face-to-face consultation between one of these health professionals and one person being supervised consisting of at least a monthly review, a written evaluation, and assessment by the supervisor of the person’s practice of clinical social work.

A licensed master social worker can offer a mental health diagnosis in consultation with a licensed physician, APRN, psychologist, marital and family therapist, or a clinical social worker.

The bill specifies that a licensed clinical social worker can perform all the functions of a licensed master social worker and practice independently. Under the bill, a licensed master social worker cannot engage in independent practice, except for a limited period of time (see below). “Independent practice” means the practice of social work without supervision.

License Requirements

The bill requires an applicant for a master social work license to (1) have a master’s degree from a social work program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education, or if educated outside the United

States or its territories, have completed an educational program the council deems equivalent and (2) pass the master-level examination of the Association of Social Work Boards or any other examination prescribed by DPH.

The application fee for a master social work license is \$175. (The law establishes a \$250 fee for licensed clinical social workers.) The renewal fee for both licenses is \$150.

Licensure by Endorsement

The bill allows the DPH commissioner to grant a license by endorsement to an applicant for a master social work license who (1) is licensed or certified as a master or clinical social worker in another state or jurisdiction whose practice requirements are substantially similar to or higher than Connecticut's and (2) has successfully completed the master-level examination of the Association of Social Work Boards or any other examination prescribed by the commissioner. The law already allows for licensure by endorsement for clinical social workers. The bill allows the commissioner to prescribe an alternative examination for clinical social workers.

No license can be issued if the applicant is facing pending disciplinary action or is the subject of an unresolved complaint.

Licensure without Examination

The bill allows DPH to issue a license without examination to anyone who demonstrates to the department's satisfaction that, by October 1, 2009, the individual met the requirements for a master social worker license.

Independent Practice

The bill allows a master social worker (presumably one who is licensed as such) to engage in independent practice between October 1, 2009 and October 1, 2012. After October 1, 2012, a master social worker cannot engage in independent practice unless he or she is licensed as a clinical social worker.

Temporary Permit

The bill allows DPH to issue a temporary permit to a license applicant who has a master's degree from an accredited or equivalent social work program but has not yet taken the required licensure examination. The temporary permit authorizes the holder to work under supervision as a master social worker for up to 120 calendar days after the date he or she receives the master's degree. A temporary permit is not renewable; it is void and cannot be reissued if the applicant fails the examination. The temporary permit fee is \$50.

Title Protection

The bill prohibits an individual from (1) using the title "licensed master social worker" or any initials associated with it or (2) advertising services under the description of a licensed master social worker, unless the individual has a master social worker license. The law already provides this protection for licensed clinical social workers.

Allowed Activities

The bill specifies that it does not prohibit (1) a social worker from practicing community organization, policy and planning, research, or administration that does not involve engaging in clinical social work or supervising a social worker engaged in clinical treatment with clients; (2) a state employee who works in a formal clinical social work trainee or internship program from practicing clinical social work under supervision without a master social worker license; and (3) individuals with a baccalaureate degree in social work from a Council on Social Work Education accredited program from performing nonclinical social work functions.

CONTINUING EDUCATION***Current Requirements for Licensed Clinical Social Workers***

Under existing law, licensed clinical social workers must meet continuing education requirements in order to have their licenses renewed. DPH is authorized to adopt, and has adopted, regulations

that define basic requirements for continuing education programs, delineate qualifying programs, establish a control and reporting system, and provide for waiving the requirements for good cause (DPH Regs. § 20-1950 (c)-1 to 7).

Current law allows a licensed clinical social worker who also holds a State Board of Education professional educator certificate with a school social worker endorsement to meet continuing education requirements for social workers by completing continuing education activities required for the educator certificate. The number of continuing education hours for maintaining the educator certificate must equal that required for clinical social worker continuing education over a one-year period.

New Requirements for Licensed Clinical Social Workers and Master Social Workers

The bill eliminates the provision that continuing education requirements be adopted by regulation and instead establishes statutory requirements for both licensed clinical and master social workers. (Some of the bill's requirements reflect those currently in regulation.)

The bill requires each type of social worker to complete a minimum of 15 hours of continuing education during each registration period. A "registration period" is the 12-month period for which a license is current and valid. The requirement for licensed master social workers begins on October 1, 2010. Continuing education must be related to the practice of social work and consist of courses, workshops, and conferences offered or approved by the Association of Social Work Boards, the National Association of Social Workers, or a school or department of social work accredited by the Council on Social Work Education.

A person can take up to six hours of on-line and home study continuing education per registration period. During the registration period, an initial presentation by a licensee of an original paper, essay,

or formal lecture in social work to a recognized group of fellow professionals may account for five continuing education hours.

Each licensee must get a certificate of completion from the continuing education provider for all hours successfully completed. The social worker must retain these certificates for a minimum of three years following the license renewal date for which the activity satisfies the continuing education requirement. The licensee must submit the certificate to DPH, upon request. A licensee failing to comply with the continuing education requirements may be subject to DPH disciplinary action including license revocation or suspension, censure, letter of reprimand, placement on probation, or a civil penalty.

The bill continues to recognize the professional educator certificate-related continuing education described above and applies it to both licensed clinical and master social workers.

Exemptions from Continuing Education

A licensee applying for his or her first renewal is exempt from the continuing education requirements. DPH may grant a waiver from the requirements or an extension of time to a licensee who has a medical disability or illness. The licensee must apply for a waiver or time extension to DPH and submit any documentation the department requires. The waiver or extension cannot exceed one registration period. DPH may grant additional waivers or extensions if the initial reason for the waiver or extension continues beyond the waiver or extension period.

DPH may also grant a continuing education waiver to a licensee who is not engaged in social work during a given registration period, if the licensee submits a waiver request before the continuing education period expires. This must be done on a department form.

A licensee granted a continuing education waiver above must complete seven hours of continuing education within six months from the date on which the licensee returned to active practice and must

comply with the certificate of completion requirements.

Reinstatement of a Void License

A licensee whose license is void because of failure to renew and who applies to DPH for reinstatement must submit evidence documenting that he or she has successfully completed seven hours of continuing education within the one year period immediately preceding the date of reinstatement application.

LICENSED CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKERS

By law, licensed clinical social workers must (1) have a doctorate or master's degree from a social work program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education, or if educated outside of the United States or its territories, have completed an educational program deemed equivalent by the council; (2) have 3,000 hours of post-master's social work experience, which must include at least 100 hours of work under professional supervision by a licensed clinical or certified independent social worker; and (3) pass the clinical level examination of the American Association of State Social Work Boards (the bill changes this to Association of Social Work Boards) or any other examination prescribed by DPH (CGS § 20-195n).

The bill specifies that beginning October 1, 2010, any work experience hours required for licensure as a clinical social worker that are completed in Connecticut must be as a licensed master social worker.

BACKGROUND

Clinical Social Work

The law defines "clinical social work" as the application, by people trained in social work, of established principles of psychosocial development, behavior, psychopathology, unconscious motivation, interpersonal relationships, and environmental stress to the evaluation, assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of biopsychosocial dysfunction, disability and impairment, including mental, emotional, behavioral, developmental and addictive disorders, of individuals, couples,

families or groups. Clinical social work includes, but is not limited to, counseling, psychotherapy, behavior modification, and mental health consultation (CGS § 20-195m(4)).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Public Health Committee

Joint Favorable Change of Reference

Yea 28 Nay 2 (03/26/2009)

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 54 Nay 0 (04/15/2009)